

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 SP-02

L-01 PRS-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 SAB-01 SAM-01 DODE-00 IO-03

SSO-00 /043 W

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O P 071225Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5888

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

USDEL ASWAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIURT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1525

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, EG

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS AND TEL AVIV

TERRORIST INCIDENT

REF: TEL AVIV 1476

1. GOI IN DECISIVE, COOL AND REASONED MANNER MOVED RAPIDLY YESTERDAY TO MAKE CLEAR TO ISRAELI PUBLIC AS WELL AS TO ALL PARTIES TO ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE THAT ATTACK ON SAVOY HTEL WOULD NOT DETER GIO FROM MOVING FOWARD IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF SECOND STAGE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI AGREEMENT. OFFICIAL GOI STATEMENT MADE EXPLICIT ASSESSMENT THAT AMONG PURPOSES OF ATTACK WAS EFFORT " TO DEFEAT ALL PROSPECTS OF PROGRESS TOWARD A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT BY WAY OF NEGOTIATIONS". STATEMENT CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT INCIDENT WOULD NOT DETER GOI FROM " MAKING DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO PROCEED TOWARDS PEACE".

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2. ISRAELI PRESS MARCH 7 ALSO HIGHLIGHTS ISRAELI INTENTION

TO PURSUE NEGOTIATION PROCESS, E.G. , JERUSALEM POST'S FRONT PAGE HEADLINE IS " RAID WOUN'T DEFLECT GOVERNMENT PEACE EFFORT" AND DAVAR'S EDITORIAL LEADER IS " TERRORISM WON'T DICTATE POLICY".

3. SENIOR GOI LEADERS HAVE CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY STATEMENT OR IMPLICATION THAT GOE EITHER WAS INVOLVED IN OR CONDONED TERRORIST ATTACK. THEY HAVE PLACED RESPONSIBILITY SQUARELY ON ARAFAT AND FATAH (SEE REFTEL). CHIEF OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE GAZIT IN BRIEFING FOREIGN JOURNALISTS LAST NIGHT ASSIDUOUSLY KEPT AWAY FROM ANY ACCUSATION AGAINST GOE. POST'S DIPLO-MATIC CORRESPONDENT LANDAU, WHILE NOTING THAT " EGYPTIAN MEDIA" HAD PLAYED UP THE INCIDENT IN GLOATING TERMS, ADDS THAT Z OBSERVERS" IN JERUSALEM BELIEVE THAT AS LONG AS GOE ITSELF DOES NOT OPENLY SUPPORT OR CONDONE ATTACK NEGOTIATING ATMOSPHERE NEED NOT BE SPOILED.

4. LIKUD OPPOITION LEADER MENAHEM BEGIN, ON OTHER HAND, PREDICTABLY ARGUED THAT TERRORIST ATTACK PLACED IN DOUBT VIABILITY OF SECRETARY'S MIDEAST MISSION. BEGIN, APPARENTLY BASING HIMSELF ON ISRAELI RADIO REPORTS QUOTING EGYPTAIN BROADCASTS, CLAIMED THAT EGYPTIANS HAD WARMLY APPLAUDED THE ATROCITY.

5. COMMENT: GOI LEADERS WILL ATTACH GREAT SIGNIFICANCE TO CONTENT AND TONE OF ANY OFFICIAL GOE STATEMENT, PARTICULARLY FROM PRESIDENT SADAT HIMSELF AS GUIDE TO IMPLICATION OF SAVOY HTEL ATTACK FOR NEGOTIATING PROSPECTS. AT THIS POINT, WE ARE IMPRESSED BY GOI'S DETERMINATION AS EXPRESSED PUBLICLY NOT TO ALLOW INCIDENT TO MAR NEGOTIATING ATMOSPHERE--WHICH IT RECOGNIZES WOULD PLAY INTO HANDS OF ARAB EXTREMISTS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GOI FACES ANY PROBLEM AT THIS STAGE IN HANDLING ITS DOMESTIC CRITICS, OR THAT BEGIN AND HIS ASSOCIATES CAN PREVENT NEGOTIATIONG PROCESS FROM MOVING FOWARD.
KEATING

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